



# Hamilton County Emergency Management

## Flooding Preparation and Safety

March 23, 2018

Hamilton County Emergency Management has recognized Severe Weather Preparedness week this year by focusing on topics that can and do effect Hamilton County each year.

This week, we have covered several topics to help our residents be more aware of threats and what to do to be better prepared. Topics included:

- Family Preparedness and the importance of making a plan and exercising the plan with your family
- Sheltering during severe weather, where to go and what you should take with you when you seek shelter
- The differences between weather watches and warnings
- Thunderstorm Safety and what to do during a severe thunderstorm

Today's topic is flood safety and how to prepare for and react to a flooding situation. Historically, the greatest weather threat that effects Hamilton County is flooding. Flooding kills more people than any other weather hazard. The majority of deaths from flooding occur when people become trapped in vehicles when driving through high water.

There are two types of flooding, flash flooding and river flooding.

- Flash floods are usually caused by slow-moving thunderstorms or thunderstorms that move over the same area one after the other, called training. These floods usually occur within hours of heavy rainfall and are usually more life-threatening as a result. Areas most prone to flash floods are creeks and rivers, urban areas, low-lying areas, and culverts. Typically, sandbags are not effective for this type of flooding because the incident occurs so fast.
- River flooding is caused by the gradual increase in the water level of a river or creek. These floods usually occur seasonally with general rains or with heavy rainfall from tropical systems. River flooding is somewhat predictable and offers time to prepare. Sandbags (including plastic material and pumps) can be of tremendous help to prevent damage to your home or property but only if used properly.

Hamilton County, in partnership with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, will offer free prefilled sandbags to residents after the National Weather Service issues a Flood Warning. The location and hours of sandbag pickup is promoted through a press release, announced on Emergency Management's website, and information shared on the County's Emergency Management smartphone app.



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When flooding is imminent, it is imperative that you get to higher ground. If possible, getting out of an area that is subject to flooding such as low spots, underpasses, and areas near creeks and rivers. If you are in your vehicle, do not attempt to drive through water over a roadway. The road could be washed out, or debris in the flowing water could damage your vehicle. If your vehicle becomes trapped in moving or rising water, call 911 and try to escape your vehicle and get to higher ground, keeping in mind that the safest and highest “ground” may be the roof of your car. Do not try to swim out of flood waters!



Hamilton County Emergency Management hopes the topics covered this week were helpful to you and your family. If you belong to an organization or church and would like for us to come and speak to your group about Severe Weather Preparedness or emergency management, please contact our office.

If you need more information on flooding or the other topics we covered this week feel free to download the free Hamilton County Emergency Management App on your smartphone, or you can go to [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or [www.hamiltoncounty.gov/em](http://www.hamiltoncounty.gov/em).



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